

NSC BRIEFING NOTES

28 October 1953

INDICATIONS OF COMMUNIST INTENTIONS IN KOREA

No indications  
of renewed  
hostilities

- 1. Available evidence of Communist activity since the armistice gives no reliable indication that the Communists are preparing to renew hostilities in Korea.
- 2. On the contrary the bulk of evidence indicates that the Communists are proceeding on the assumption that the war will not be renewed either by the United Nations or by the Communists.

Present ground  
activity

- 1. The Communists have somewhat reduced their ground forces, but still maintain substantial strength in Korea.
  - a. Two Chinese armies have been withdrawn since the armistice and some Chinese forces on the front lines have been replaced by North Koreans.
  - b. The enemy troops for the most part are engaged in training, barracks construction and similar routine activities.

2. Several recent unconfirmed reports describe large-scale movements of troops and equipment into North Korea.

a. This could be accomplished without confirmation by Neutral Nations Inspection Teams.

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Present air activity

- 1. The most significant military activity since the armistice has been the repair of airfields in North Korea and the movement of the bulk of the North Korean air force from Manchuria into North Korea.
- a. In the three months since the armistice the number of serviceable airfields has risen from

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2 to 18, with 8 of these believed adequate to

support operations by jet light bombers.

b. In the same period the number of aircraft in

North Korea has risen from 8 to 250, including

150 MIG's, 50 conventional fighters and 50 ground

attack planes.

2. These activities can be explained as routine military

precautions.

a. The Communists may be concerned over the strength

of UN forces still deployed in South Korea.

b. They may also be worried by the possibility that

Syngman Rhee's activities may precipitate

hostilities.

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Probable enemy  
courses of action  
if hostilities  
were expected

1. If the Communists did intend to renew military operations they would probably take certain preparatory measures.

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Present economic  
activity

1. The enemy's economic activities also indicate no preparation for hostilities.

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b. In Manchuria and China the evidence indicates the Communists are primarily concerned with implementing their Five-Year Plan.

c. In the Soviet Union, Moscow's present economic policies, emphasizing a shift to consumer goods, do not appear to anticipate an immediate major increase in military outlay.

2. The plans for reconstructing North Korean industry, so promptly announced by Moscow, suggest there is no immediate intention to again expose these factories to UN air attack.

a. Instead, the Malenkov regime apparently has decided to rebuild North Korea as a member of the Orbit and to counter the strengthening of South Korea's economy and armed forces.

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rent political  
ivity

1. In the political field Soviet propaganda attention to Korea has been at a low volume and has carefully avoided providing Khee with any pretext for launching an attack.
  - a. Comments on the US-South Korean Security Pact have disappeared almost entirely.
  - b. The predominant charge is that the US is undermining the repatriation commission and is obstructing and violating the armistice.
2. On the issue of the political conference the Communists have been careful not to close the door to further negotiations.
  - a. They have refrained from openly threatening to boycott the conference if their proposals are not adopted.
  - b. Chou-En-lai finally accepted the US proposal for further conversations on the time and place but

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still insisted that the question of membership must also be discussed.

3. The Communists' current political actions suggest that they will continue their delaying and divisive tactics.

a. Their continued insistence on an enlarged round-table conference is designed to exploit the differences between the US and its allies over this issue.

b. They have tried to encourage the belief among non-Communist countries that they would modify their position to some extent if the US would also make concessions.

**Summary**

1. As the situation stands today, the Communists are maintaining substantial ground forces in Korea and have very considerably improved their air capability.

a. However, this can be explained as routine military precautions.

2. There is no positive evidence that the Communists have substantially reinforced their ground units or have taken the preparatory and defensive measures that would normally precede a renewal of hostilities.

a. Experience of the past three years makes us reasonably confident that some indications of these activities would be detected by US intelligence sources.

3. It would appear that the present Communist plan is to rebuild North Korea as a member of the Orbit and to continue to use the political conference as a delaying and divisive tactic in dealing with the West.